

FASTING,
AS A RELIGIOUS EXERCISE;

By X. X.

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE ORIGIN OF THE
CHURCH FASTS,
AND OF THE DOCTRINE OF
APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION;

BY
B. HOMER DIXON.

"He that created thee without thy aid, will He not without thy aid save thee?"—*St. Augustine.*

"I do not enjoin you as Peter and Paul: they were Apostles, I a condemned man."—*St. Ignatius.*

TORONTO:
COPP, CLARK & CO.
1871.

BV35. F2

FASTING

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ERRATA.

- Page 28, line 6—For 62 read 61,
 „ 32, „ 5 from bottom—For *ceruleis* read *cæruleis*.
 „ 33, „ 10—For *eight* read *nine*.
 „ 36, „ 23—For *Welsh* read *Some Welsh historians*.

FASTING: AS A RELIGIOUS EXERCISE:

WHAT IS IT? IS IT NECESSARY?

Much difficulty has been experienced by religious and earnest people in answering these questions; and though, by the vast majority of mankind who think at all about such things, the answer to these questions would be given just as they belong to this or that party in the Church, there are not a few thoughtful earnest minds that have been and are perplexed on this subject. On the one hand, fasting seems to be recognised by our Lord as an accompaniment of prayer; on the other, when they have tried to exercise themselves in it, it has failed to bring a blessing. It is especially for these that this pamphlet is written; though it is hoped that God may use it to show those who lay great stress upon fasting the true ground upon which it stands, and those who lay *no* stress upon it that there is a deep and spiritual sense in which it is necessary as an adjunct to the higher life. For in this matter it is not, as often, that between the two extremes we find the truth. The truth, as I hope to be able to convince the reader, lies far wide of both extremes.

Ist, then, What is fasting?

In Isaiah lviii. 3 to 7—"Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours. Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high. Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord? Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" Here we are very clearly shown both what fasting was, and what it was not meant to be, in Old Testament days; but we need not to look to the Old Testament at all. In the New Testament, in the history of our Lord, we shall find enough to guide us; for there are in His life and words some remarkable passages relating to this subject. We begin with Matt. iv., 2: there we read—"When Jesus had *fasted* forty days He was *afterwards* an hungered." That was when He was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted. We observe here that the fasting is

spoken of as a casual part of the transaction—no stress laid upon it—it seemed natural to the writer that when Jesus was led up of the Spirit, He should fast; yea, though His life was miraculously sustained during that long season; still, no notice is taken of the miracle, for, if He were forty days led of the Spirit, it was no cause of wonder that He fasted; and it was not until the claims of nature made themselves felt, until, in fact, the Spirit became subservient to the flesh, and the body asserted its claims, which up to this time had been overwhelmed by the things of the Spirit, that the tempter came. Here we have, I venture to think, the example of Christ as to fasting. (Matt. vi. 16.) Our Lord *teaches* very plainly what, in His opinion, fasting is, viz.: appearing as if one was not doing anything extraordinary, not to make a show of denying ourselves, and by making a long face, draw attention to our act. In fact, to *act* as if we were not fasting, as if we did not feel our hunger! Again, (Mark ii. 18–21) our Lord is asked why His disciples did not fast, as John's disciples did. His answer is, They do not fast now because the Bridegroom is with them, and they are joyful. "The days will come when the Bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days." Why? Because He has commanded them? No! But because they will be overcome with sorrow, and will not therefore care to eat. The same is repeated in Luke v. 33. In fact, our Lord *taught* that in fasting, as He described it, men do not eat,

because they do not want—that is not a matter of ceremony but a matter of will.

Then, as to the result of fasting, see Matt. xvii. 14 to 21—"And when they were come to the multitude, there came to Him a certain man, kneeling down to Him and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatic, and sore vexed; for oft-times he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And I brought him to Thy disciples, and they could not cure him. Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said: Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by *prayer* and *fasting*."*

* The authorized version has been followed here. Like Luther's it was made from the Greek Text of Erasmus (1516) and Stephens (1550), formed from manuscripts of later date than the tenth century, and which from the mere process of copying and re-copying alone for so many centuries, were not free from errors, and also interpolations, made to suit peculiar creeds. Since then, however, Greek, Latin, and other manuscripts have been discovered, the oldest of which, the Sinaitic, was made perhaps as early as A.D. 331; the Vatican which comes next, about the year 350, and the Alex-

It is here narrated that the disciples were unable to cast out a devil, and that Jesus attributes their failure to want of faith, adding, however, that this kind cometh forth only by *prayer* and *fasting*: therefore, if the faith had been there, the prayer and fasting must have been there also. Just as in His teaching He had spoken of prayer and fasting together, so now in practice He associates them together. Why does He do so? Is it not that He means to convey that this miracle could only be worked by a man of such devotion of spirit, of such fervent prayer, with a mind so wrapt in its holy work, that he has, for the time, lost all sense of bodily wants—a man in whom the spirit has for the time completely conquered the flesh. Does not our Lord, in fact, teach by His example and by His words that fasting is the *result* of a holy frame of mind, not the *cause* of it. I can explain this by a simple and well recognised illustration. It is no uncommon thing for persons to be so prostrated and wrapt in grief, either on the death of some loved one, or at the news of some distress, that they loathe the sight of food for days, and it is with the greatest difficulty they can be persuaded to eat. Why is this? Simply that they are so absorbed in their grief that they do not feel the

andrian about 450. It is worthy of note that in the two oldest versions, according to Alford, this 21st verse "Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting," is entirely omitted, but it is found in the other ancient manuscript versions and Fathers. In Mark ix. 29, the words "and fasting" are not found in the two most ancient MSS—B. H. D.

ordinary wants of the body : a stronger feeling has overcome even the need for food. In this case, fasting is clearly the result of the state of mind—it is so absorbed in its distress that it has no power of thought for other things, and does not feel the wants of the body. If we apply this to Christian fasting, we shall, I think, be able to understand something of what it is, and be helped to comprehend Christ's example, Christ's teaching, and His practical illustration of the power of fasting, when springing from its only true source. But perhaps it may be objected that I am setting up an idea that is impossible, that though a man may be absorbed by grief to the exclusion of *all* other things, that it cannot be, that a man shall be *so* absorbed in heavenly things as not to feel the need of food, or rather forget all about it. But this is only from the low state of spirituality of the Church ; it is not impossible, for I myself have known happy instances ; and I have no doubt, in the days of the first zeal of the Church, they were constant, and that it was from the example so set that it became the fashion to fast at all. The world, or the less religious, saw these men and women intensely spiritual, setting apart seasons for prayer, which were also seasons of fasting, simply because they were so occupied and absorbed with their devotions that they wanted no food, and they jumped at the conclusion that eating no food (fasting) was the secret of their spirituality ; and when people wanted to be religious, they were recommended to fast, and

so fasting dwindled down to what it is now, when a man having eaten a *recherché* dinner of fish and eggs, cooked in every conceivable form, and with every luxury, imagines himself to have fasted and gained some spiritual good. From this point of view, the answer to what is Christian fasting is simple, viz., "It is a consequence of a spiritual state of mind, in which a man is so absorbed as to make him forget the wants of the body."

2nd, Is fasting necessary? For the realisation of the higher Christian life *it is necessary* that the soul should be capable of such absorption in the things of the Spirit as to abstain from food and all fleshly and earthly desires without effort, or even consciousness of any sacrifice—therefore to have an experience in abstinence from food (but not food only) *is necessary* to a Christian if he is to know the height and depth of the love of Christ. But it *is not* necessary as a means to attain to this, rather the contrary; I apprehend that, so far from the soul being strengthened or blessed by such an outward exercise, it is weakened; and this view is borne out by the writers of the Acts and Epistles to their converts, for it is remarkable that in no one instance is the practice of fasting recommended as a means of growing in grace, much less is it enjoined. But in the consideration of the necessity of fasting as a religious exercise I must carefully guard myself from being supposed to fix a standard up to which all must come. In doing this I should depart from the very principle of the Gospel, wherein

no standard of practice is fixed for any one. Perfection is the aim pointed out for all: the only standard, the true desire to attain thereto. For the circumstances of all will necessarily have much to do with the possibility of arriving at this higher degree of spirituality. For instance, a Christian man in business—"diligent in business" because he is a Christian—his mind occupied with many cares, cannot, unless very exceptionally, so withdraw his mind from the world as to be completely absorbed in the things of God; and yet, if he be a true Christian, he will long for the time when he shall have the opportunity of doing this. And of this we may be sure, that it is not until this entire consecration of the soul to God is arrived at that the spirit of a man can at all realise the fulness of the good things God has prepared for them that love Him.

I have already remarked that in the Acts and Epistles there is no recommendation to the practice of fasting, and my task will be concluded when I have shewn that the few passages in which fasting is mentioned, are not inconsistent with the views put forth in this pamphlet.

In Acts x. 30, Cornelius says—"Four days ago, I was fasting until this hour, and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house."* The angel answered, "Thy *prayer* is heard, thine *alms* are had in remem-

* The four most ancient MSS. have "I was until this hour keeping the ninth hour of prayer:" *omitting* "was fasting."—B. H. D.

brance," but no word of recognition of the fasting. Was it not a part and consequence of prayer?

Acts xiv. 23—"And when they (Paul and Barnabas) had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord." Here the intimation seems clearly that they made a season of prayer, so earnest that it involved fasting.

Acts xiii. 3—"And when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away." Here the words seem to point to a season of prayer for a particular object—prayer which was so earnest that it involved fasting as a consequence of it.

1 Cor. vii. 5—"Except it be with consent for a time that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer."* Except, that is, when ye set apart a season for prayer, when there will be no need or desire for earthly wants.

The other passages where fasting is mentioned are clearly speaking of fasting in the sense of hunger—as 2 Cor. xi. 27, "In fastings often." I am aware these passages (the only ones, be it remembered, relating to the subject) do not point directly to the view I have submitted; but it appears to me they are in no ways antagonistic to it. And they are, I venture to think, quite as clearly explained on the view set forth here as on the other view of the question; and then, taking into con-

* Dean Alford translates this "that ye may be free for prayer." The words "fasting and" are wanting in all our principal oldest authorities.—B. H. D.

sideration the fact that there is no injunction in the New Testament to Christians to fast (for Matt. vi. 16, was addressed to Jews who *were* commanded to fast by the Law, and these verses simply told them, if you expect any benefit from the observance of this Law, do not appear to men to fast, as Isaiah had before told them), we may fairly say that the outward act of fasting is not laid down in Scripture as necessary to the Christian for the growth of grace in the soul. I shall not attempt here to show how it is that the Church of Rome and other branches have enjoined it, as that would launch us into a sea of controversy; I will leave it for each to fathom the depth if they can. But I will, in conclusion, add this—that while I do not believe that fasting in the ordinary use of it is either necessary or profitable, I think it possible there may be individuals who may find it a help to their Christian lives, a help I would not wish to deprive them of, only let them carefully examine themselves lest in this, (as we are all apt to do in all things) they think what is useful to them, *must* be also useful to others, and either condemn others who use it not, or think themselves more spiritual because they do use it. The true spiritual use of fasting, as I hope I have shown, consists in its being the result of prayer, not in its being a means to it.

THE CHURCH FASTS.

A few words on the history of the fasts observed by the Church of England will not be out of place as an appendix to this treatise. They consist, according to the Canons, of Lent, including Ash-Wednesday and Good Friday, the Ember-Days, the three Rogation-Days, all the Fridays in the year, except Christmas Day, and the Eves or Vigils of certain festivals, making together more than one hundred fasts in the course of the year.

The Spring Fast, called in English, Lent, from the Anglo-Saxon word *lencten*, spring, can lay claim to neither scriptural nor apostolical authority, although it has been erroneously traced to the time of the Apostles from being mentioned in the sixth Apostolical Canon, but it is now well known that the so-called Apostolical Canons are forgeries, chiefly compiled during the second and third centuries, although a modern critic supposes them not to have attained their present form until as late as the fifth century.

The primitive Christians, however, according to the best authorities, only fasted about forty hours, or less than two days, beginning from the afternoon of the Friday on which they commemorated the crucifixion until the morning of the Sunday of the

resurrection, but by degrees considerable changes were made, and while some only fasted one day, others observed additional days, but with great variety of number, according to the judgment of the various churches, until at length it was settled at a tithe of the year, or thirty-six days, by Pope Telesphorus, A.D. 130.

It then began on the Sunday now called the first Sunday in Lent, but in the year 487, Felix III. first added the four days preceding the old Lent Sunday, and permanently raised the number of fast-days to forty; and about a century later Pope Gregory the Great (590-604) introduced the sprinkling of ashes on the first of the four additional days, and hence the name of Ash-Wednesday.

The Lenten Fast was first commanded to be observed in England by Ercenberht, seventh king of Kent (640-664), grand-son of St. Æthelbyrht, first Christian king of Kent, and no meat was formerly to be eaten during Lent, but by license, for which, of course, payment was to be made.

This was different from the custom of the primitive Christians whose manner of fasting was to abstain from all food until evening, or rather until the hour when our Lord gave up the ghost—the ninth hour, or 3 P.M., when they took supper, and then it was indifferent whether it was flesh or any other kind of food, provided it was used with sobriety and moderation.

There was, however, much dissension on the subject, and some held three kinds of Fasts; the

first of which was the fast on Wednesdays and Fridays, which ended at three in the afternoon. The second, the Lent Fast which ended about the evening, and the third, which was the strictest of all and which lasted till the cock-crowing.

Mosheim says that in the third century fasting "began to be held in more esteem than it had formerly been; a high degree of sanctity was attributed to this practice, and it was even looked upon as of indispensable necessity, from a notion that the demons directed their stratagems principally against those who pampered themselves with delicious fare, and were less troublesome to the lean and the hungry, who lived under the severities of a rigorous abstinence;" and in the following century, he adds, it was considered as "the most effectual and powerful means of repelling the force, and disconcerting the stratagems of evil spirits, and of appeasing the anger of an offended Deity. Hence we may easily understand what induced the rulers of the Church to establish this custom by express laws, and to impose, as an indispensable duty, an act of humiliation, the observance of which had hitherto been left to every one's choice. The Quadragesimal, or Lent-fast, was held more sacred than all the rest, though it was not as yet confined to a fixed number of days. We must, however, remark, that the fasts observed in this century were very different from those that were solemnized in the preceding times. Formerly those who submitted themselves to the discipline of fasting abstained

wholly from meat and drink; but now a mere abstinence from flesh and wine was, by many, judged sufficient for the purposes of fasting, and this latter opinion prevailed from this time, and became universal among the Latins."

Saturday was observed as a feast day in Milan so late as the time of St. Ambrose (who died A.D. 397), when it was a Fast in Rome. St. Ambrose writes to Augustine that when at Rome he did as the Romans did, and when at Milan as the Milanese.

After the Reformation the Romish custom of eating fish on fast days was reintroduced in England for political reasons only. By a statute (2 and 3 Edw. IV. according to Wheatly, but Dean Hook says 5 Eliz. 5) none were allowed to eat flesh on fish days (which are here declared to be all Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays) without a license. But the same act is declared to be a mere political law, for the increase of cattle and for the encouragement of fishermen and mariners, and repairing of port towns and navigation, and not for any superstition to be maintained in the choice of meats.

The Ember weeks, or Fasts of the Four Seasons, formerly called also Emberings, were so named from a corruption of a part of the Latin name *Fejunia quatuor temporum*, Fast of the Four Seasons.

Wheatly, it is true, gives three other derivations all equally unsatisfactory, omitting this, which seems perfectly clear especially when compared with its German name *quatember*. In Dutch it is called *quatertemper*.

A week in each quarter of the year is thus distinguished, and the Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays are the Ember Days. They are, it is believed, first mentioned by Pope Leo the Great (440—461), and other writers of his time, and were ordained to implore the blessing of God on the produce of the earth by prayer and fasting.

If, however, it is not a strange season to make such prayers in the middle of September, when much of the harvest is already gathered in and the next year's crop is not yet planted, it certainly appears to be so in the middle of December when in many countries all vegetation is dormant, and in some the ground is even covered with snow.

The Ember weeks are now considered as the season for the ordination of ministers of the Church of England, such having been the custom in the Roman Catholic Church, and the whole Church is expected to fast and pray for those who are entering holy orders whether there are to be any ordinations in the diocese or not.

But, and I say it in all kindness for no one can esteem more highly the true minister of Christ than myself, is not this unduly exalting the office of a minister?

It may do for the upholders of the dogma of Apostolic succession like the Ritualists, but Archbishop Whately, a far greater theologian than the Bishop of Winchester, denounces solemnly this assumption as having no reliable foundation whatever, saying, "There is not a minister in all Chris-

tendom who is able to trace up with any approach to certainty his own spiritual pedigree." This is the candid confession of the late Dr. Richard Whately, formerly principal of St. Alban's Hall, Oxford, and afterwards Archbishop of Dublin, who furthermore goes on to say, "We read of bishops consecrated when mere children ; of men officiating who barely knew their letters ; of prelates expelled, and others put in their places by violence ; of illiterate and profligate laymen, and habitual drunkards admitted to holy orders ; and in short, of the prevalence of every kind of disorder, and reckless disregard of the decency which the Apostle enjoins."

Even the first link of the chain is more than a doubtful one, for as Canon Trevor says, "not a particle of historical evidence exists that the Apostle Peter ever visited Rome at all, while the legends of his death and burial there are contrary to Scripture and to common sense."

The authority of Peter was asserted for the sake of the primacy supposed to be devolved upon him by the text "Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church," and Roman divines interpret this as conferring an infallible supremacy, first, on the apostle Peter, and secondly, upon the bishops of Rome his successors, but that the Apostle Paul did not acknowledge this supremacy the New Testament shows ; the apostolical Fathers are silent upon the subject, and Canon Trevor says "no point of history is more certain than that the primacy of

St. Peter was never heard of during the first three centuries of the Church."

Generations had elapsed before the words "Thou art Peter" began to be interpreted in the present Roman sense, and the most illustrious of the fathers did not so explain it. Origen (died about A.D. 255), although in one place he says the rock was Peter, says also "The rock is every disciple of Christ If thou thinkest that the whole Church is built by God upon Peter only, what dost thou say of John, the son of thunder, and every one of the other apostles? Or shall we dare to say that the gates of hell were not to prevail specially against Peter? Were they, then, to prevail against the other apostles and the faithful?"

St. Ambrose says, "'To thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven, that thou mayest both loose and bind,' What is said to Peter is said to the other Apostles."

St. Chrysostom (died A.D. 407), says, "'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church;' that is, on the faith of his confession."

Ruffinus (died A.D. 410), says, "The Lord Jesus Christ is both the Rock and the Head. Concerning this rock the Lord Himself said, 'And upon this rock I will build my Church.'"

St. Jerome (died A.D. 420), says, "'On this rock the Lord founded His Church; from this rock the Apostle Peter obtained his name. . . . 'And I will give unto you the keys of the kingdom of heaven.' Bishops and presbyters, not understand-

ing this passage, assume to themselves something of the superciliousness of the Pharisees, thinking that they can condemn the innocent and absolve the guilty. . . ."

St. Augustine (died A.D. 430), says, "' Upon this rock' which thou hast confessed 'will I build my Church.' For the Rock was Christ, upon which foundation Peter himself was also built." He says in another place, "Now the name of Peter was given him by the Lord, and that in a figure that *he should signify the Church*. For seeing that Christ is the Rock (*petra*), *Peter is the Christian people*. For the rock (*petra*) is the original name. Therefore Peter is so called from the rock (*petra*), not the rock (*petra*) from Peter; as Christ is not called Christ from Christian, but the Christian from Christ. Therefore He saith, 'Thou art Peter; and upon this Rock' which thou hast confessed, upon this Rock (*petram*) which thou hast acknowledged saying, 'Thou art the Christ the Son of the Living God,' will I build my Church, that is, upon myself, the Son of the Living God, 'will I build my Church.' I will build thee upon myself, not myself upon thee."

Theodoret, Leo and other Fathers, as quoted in Harrison's "Whose are the Fathers?" (London, 1867), agree with the foregoing.

Among the moderns, "Janus" says, "Of all the Fathers who interpret these passages in the Gospels (Matt. xvi. 18, John xxi. 17), not a single one applies them to the Roman bishops as Peter's successors."

Justin Martyr, who died about a century after St. Peter, is the first who mentions the tradition of Peter's having visited Rome. He relates a legend that St. Peter went in pursuit of Simon Magus, who after his defeat fled to Rome, and was there worshipped as a God, and in support of this story, Justin appeals to an image which he had seen in an island in the Tiber with the inscription "Simoni Deo Sancto."

The Italian proverb was wonderfully verified in this instance—

"Truth may languish, but can never perish."

Fourteen centuries after the death of the Grecian philosopher, (who died a Christian martyr about A.D. 165), in the year 1574, this very inscription was found on a stone in the Tiber, and proves to be "Semoni Sanco Deo Fidio Sacrum." Justin who did not understand Latin, was imposed upon, for the dedication is to the Sabine Deity Sancus or Sangus !

Irenæus in a work written about the time of Justin's death is the next who mentions it, and he says that *according to tradition* the Church at Rome was founded by Peter and Paul.

Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, (about A. D. 170), calls the Roman and Corinthian Churches the joint planting of Peter and Paul ; but the bishop was mistaken with regard even to his own Church, which was founded by Paul.

St. Peter dates his first epistle from Babylon, and most of the Fathers interpreted this as the mystical

city, or Pagan Rome, as they read it, not Papal, forgetting that there was but one Babylon at the time Peter wrote, viz., Babylon in Egypt, where Old Cairo now stands, and where there was then a large Jewish population. Babylon on the Euphrates was an uninhabited ruin, and the seven-hilled city had not received its apocalyptic name for the Revelations were not then written.

Eusebius, who died A.D. 328, was the first ecclesiastical historian who endeavoured to complete the chain of Bishops or Popes of Rome which had existed from his time up to that of the apostles, and he confesses "as the first of those that have entered upon the subject, we are attempting a kind of trackless and unbeaten path," and are "totally unable to find even the bare vestiges of those who may have travelled the way before us; unless, perhaps, what is only presented in the slight intimations, which some in different ways have transmitted to us in certain partial narratives of the times in which they lived;" and respecting those who were the successors of St. Paul and St. Peter, he says, "It is not easy to say, any further than may be gathered from the writings of Paul."

Stillingfleet, Bishop of Worcester, says—"The succession is as muddy as the Tiber itself; for here Tertullian, Ruffinus and several others place Clement next to Peter; Irenæus and Eusebius set Anacletus before him; Epiphanius and Optatus, both Anacletus and Cletus; Augustine and Dama-

sus, with others, make Anacletus, Cletus, and Linus all to precede him.*

Others place Cletus next after Linus, Clemens succeeding him, followed by Anacletus ; but Pearson, Bishop of Chester, proves that Cletus and Anacletus were two names of the same person, Cletus being the abbreviation.

Even the Romish historian of the Councils, Casabane, says—"It is a very doubtful question concerning Linus, Cletus and Clemens, as to which of them succeeded Peter."

Tertullian, who died about A.D. 220, is styled by Canon Robertson "perhaps the most eminent man whom the Church had seen since the days of the Apostles ;" and Mosheim says of him—"His learning was extensive and profound ; and yet his credulity and superstition were such as might have been expected from the darkest ignorance." St. Irenæus was born about A.D. 140, twenty years before Tertullian, and died about A. D. 102. Mosheim says his writings are "the most precious monuments of ancient erudition."

* Ruffinus was, next to Jerome, the most learned biblical scholar of his age. Eusebius, to whom I have already referred, has been justly called the father of ecclesiastical history, but he was withal "superstitious and prone to fables." Epiphanius is mentioned in "The East in Prayer." He tells us that Peter and Paul were both bishops of Rome *at once*. Optatus, bishop of Milevi, in Numidia, flourished about A.D. 370. St. Augustine was bishop of Hippo. Jerome styles him "the most noted bishop of the whole world." Damasus was a bishop of Rome who died A.D. 384.

Stillingfleet makes an unimportant error here, but the succession is every whit as muddy as he says.

Tertullian places Clement next after Peter, while Irenæus says, Peter and Paul, Linus, Anacletus, Clement!

Is it not strange that these two doctors disagree? Tertullian mentions rolls of bishops, and the register (*census*) of the Romans. Irenæus says, "We challenge the Hereticks to that Tradition (*traditionem*) which was handed down from the Apostles by the Succession of Bishops." If the rolls mentioned by Tertullian were written ones, were they tampered with or destroyed soon after he saw them, and was it already only a *tradition* when Irenæus wrote? Did Tertullian see the rolls and write in his youth, and his senior, Irenæus, only write in his old age, after the rolls, if they were written ones, were destroyed?

Jerome says—"Clement was the fourth after St. Peter. If, indeed, Linus was the second, and Anacletus the third. Many of the Latins, however, think that Clement was second after the Apostle Peter."

St. Jerome, who died in 420, was the most learned man of his day, but where were Dean Hook's Catalogues of Bishops then, that Jerome should say *if indeed* Linus was the second, but *many think* it was Clement?

The truth appears to be that neither of them succeeded Peter, because he was never Bishop of Rome, nor was the Church of Rome founded either by him or even by St. Paul, as is perfectly clear from the Epistle to the Romans, wherein Paul

writes to the Church *already established*, "often-times I purposed to come unto you, but was let hitherto."

The Church of Rome was probably founded by some of those Jews of Rome who were at the Feast of Pentecost, and probably by Aquila and Priscilla, his wife, for Paul says—"Greet Priscilla and Aquila. . . . Likewise *the Church that is in their house*," which Dr. Hodge interprets as "the Church which is accustomed to assemble in their house"—and Clemens was probably the first bishop.

According to Eusebius, St. Peter went to Rome in pursuit of Simon Magus, in the reign of Claudius (died A.D. 54), and remained there twenty years. Jerome says twenty-five years, which latter number are still called "the years of St. Peter." He was martyred probably in A.D. 64, or not later than 68, and must therefore, according to the above fathers, have arrived in Rome either as early as A.D. 41, the first year of Claudius, or in 44-48.

But how does Holy Writ agree with tradition? Peter, it is true, left the city of Jerusalem in or about the year 44 (Acts xii. 17), but there is no proof that he then went to Rome, and even if he did do so, we know that a few years after (about A.D. 51) he was again in Jerusalem at the meeting of the Church (Acts xv.)

In 53, he was at Antioch (Gal. ii. 11), and about 59, when Paul wrote his first Epistle to the Corinthians, Peter was travelling about as a missionary, accompanied by his wife (1 Cor. ix. 5). He was

not in Rome the following year, or Paul would certainly have saluted him together with the others mentioned in Romans xvi., but he really was in Babylon, in Egypt, in that year (A.D. 60), and wrote his first Epistle there.

In 62, Paul arrived a prisoner in Rome, and met the Christians of that city (Acts xxviii.), but Peter's name is not mentioned.

About 63, Paul wrote from Rome his last Epistles, and mentions his companions and helpers by name, but is silent about Peter.

It is difficult to reconcile the two accounts.

The learned German professor, Kurtz, points out the origin of the fable. He says, "The legend about *Peter's bishopric at Rome* (according to Eusebius from the year 42-67), is derived from the heretical, pseudoepigraphic Clementines and Recognitions,—an authority entirely untrustworthy. On the other hand, it can be proved that Peter had come to Rome only in the year 63. The silence of the Epistle to the Romans is alone sufficient to prove the worthlessness of the above legend."

The Clementines and Recognitions, falsely attributed to Clement of Rome, are supposed to have been written in the latter part of the second century. Canon Robertson calls them "undoubtedly spurious."

It is generally allowed that Peter suffered martyrdom in the Neronian persecution, which, according to Tacitus, broke out in July, 64, and not in 67, as Eusebius and Jerome say.

The first Roman bishop who claimed obedience on account of the supremacy of St. Peter, was Stephen, A.D. 253-257.

Some of these self-styled successors of St. Peter were chosen when mere boys, as John XI (A.D. 931), called the Infamous, son of Pope Sergius and his paramour, Marozia, made pope at eighteen, and Benedict IX (A.D. 1033) who became pope by purchase at the same age, although, according to some writers he was only twelve, an age which does not seem improbable when we know that a child of five years was made archbishop of Rheims, that Charles, Cardinal de Bourbon, (who died 1488) was archbishop of Lyons at nine; Giovanni de' Medici, afterwards Pope Leo X., an archbishop at eleven; he barely escaped the prelacy four years previous, for he was nominated by the king of France to the archbishopric of Aix when at the age of seven, but while the Papal confirmation was in the course of being procured, word came that the titular was still alive. George, Cardinal d'Amboise (who died in 1510), was made bishop of Rouen at fourteen; and Pope Paul III. (1534) made his two grandsons cardinals—one at fourteen and the other at sixteen; and pages might be filled with similar cases.

To cap the climax let me add that Bungener, in his History of the Council of Trent, relates that the last abbé of St. Denis was an illegitimate son of Louis XIV; and was three years old when his father conferred that dignity upon him. Fancy if you can, an abbot, Superior of the great Abbey of

St. Denis, one of the most important and wealthy religious foundations in France, and the burial place of her kings,—the Westminster Abbey of France—*aged three years!* What would Dean Stanley say to having such a Superior?

Simony was always a great blot upon both the Greek and the Roman churches.

St. Ambrose charges archbishops with selling ordinations; and that the bishops so ordained, in their turn ordained presbyters and consecrated deacons for gold, and adds "I confess this is what I grieve over, that an archbishop carnally makes a bishop. For the sake of money he has ordained a man spiritually leprous a bishop of this sort appears to carnal eyes as if he were a great bishop, but to the divine ken a great leprous bishop. . . . What he gave when he was ordained bishop was gold, and what he lost was his soul; when he ordained another, what he received was money, and *what he gave was leprosy.*"

The six bishops whom St. Chrysostom deposed in one day, all confessed that they had bought their bishoprics, and then sold the rite of ordination to reimburse themselves.

In England, in 1070, Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, was deprived of his see for simony, but this unjust and violent deposition of a pure and staunch churchman, who refused to recognize the Pope except as Bishop of Rome only, was done by means of false charges, and was the disgraceful act of a council.

In France about this time we find Bernard, a viscount, and Frotherius, bishop of Albi, in Aquitaine, selling openly to Bernard Aimard and his son the bishopric of Albi, and this act is followed by another in which Count Pontius *bequeaths to his wife* this same bishopric of Albi in the following terms: "Ego Pontius dono tibi dilectæ sponsæ meæ episcopatum Albiensem—cum ipsa ecclesia et cum omni adjacentia sua—et medietatem de episcopatu Nemauso—et medietatem de abbacia Sti Ægidii—post obitum tuum remaneat ipsius alodis ad infantes qui de me erunt creati."

In 1367, it was found that some clerks in England enjoyed more than twenty benefices by the Pope's dispensation; but such was the corruption even of the apostolic chamber a century later that one of its secretaries, Nicholas de Clemangis, rector of the University of Paris, asserted that some ecclesiastics held five hundred benefices.

Look next at the anti-popes, of whom including the Great Schism there were twenty-five or thirty, and how many of them consecrated English bishops?

The Great Schism lasted for forty years. Two popes ruled, one at Rome and one at Avignon, each claiming to be the true Holy Father, and each conferring holy orders,—and it is still undetermined which were the true and which were the anti-popes! In 1411, there were *three* popes, each of whom had anathematized the two others.

The frightful immoralities of the popes are too well known to require repetition.

There are some defendants of Apostolical Succession however who deny that the Church of England derive their descent through the corrupt Church of Rome, but claim that they trace their line through the ancient British Church.

They do not improve their position thereby, for no one can prove when and by whom Christianity was first introduced into Britain.

Justin Martyr declared that in every country known to the Romans there were professors of Christianity, and Irenæus confirms the same and among others names the Celts as being converted.

Tertullian (died 220) is the first who names Britain. He speaks of districts in Britain which, though inaccessible to the Romans, were yet subdued to Christ, and Eusebius declares that the British Isles were converted by some of the apostles who crossed over the ocean for that purpose.

It is believed that there were Christian Britons in Rome in Paul's time, as it is pretty certain that the Claudia mentioned in Timothy (Eubulus and Pudens and Linus and Claudia) is the British lady of the same name, wife of Aulus Rufus Pudens, to whose honor the poet Martial wrote an epigram commencing "*Claudia ceruleis cum sit Rufina Britannis.*"

Some add that she was the daughter of Caradog or Caractacus, Prince of the Silures (*i. e.* Somerset, Devon and the country formerly called Gwent),

and that Linus, bishop of Rome, was her brother. For this there is no sufficient evidence, but on the contrary Ordericus Vitalis says that Linus was son of Herculaneus, and was born in Tuscany.

Bishop Stillingfleet says, "We may on good evidence affirm that a Christian Church was planted in Britain in the time of the Apostles."

Here By whom it was done, however, is a riddle that we may safely say will never be solved, for there are no less than eight to whom the honor has been ascribed, not one of whom can be proved to be the true one.

Some say the gospel was introduced by St. Paul after his imprisonment in Rome. Clement and Jerome say he went to the west, which may be interpreted Britain; but it is more probably intended for Spain, in accordance with the intention expressed in the Epistle to the Romans.

Theodoret, bishop of Cyprus in 420, however, expressly names the Britons among the nations converted by the Apostles, and says that St. Paul brought salvation to the islands that lie in the ocean.

This theory of foreign historians is not corroborated in England, either in the traditions of the times or by the annals of the country.

It is said that Paul left Rome in 63, and travelled about until the last year of Nero's reign, when he returned to Rome and was beheaded in 67-8. In those four years he may possibly have visited

Britain; but if he established the Church there would he not have given it a Roman Liturgy?

Professor Hase, of Jena, says, "It is hardly possible that he could have survived the persecution under Nero, but he was probably beheaded at Rome in 64. That he was liberated, and that he then for the first time visited the utmost limits of Western Europe, and finally ended his life during a second imprisonment in Rome, appears more like a learned conjecture than an ancient tradition."

Prof. Kurtz says: "The very common opinion, first mooted by Eusebius, that about the year 64 Paul had been set at liberty, and undertaken a fourth missionary tour in which he had penetrated as far as Spain, that thence he had *a second time been sent prisoner to Rome*, and been beheaded in that city about the year 67, owes its origin to manifest chronological mistakes. It has of late been again advocated (by Neander, Guericke, Credner, Gieseler, Huther, Wiesinger, &c.), from the erroneous supposition that some events noticed in the letters of Paul could not have occurred during the period preceding the (supposed first) imprisonment of Paul at Rome. What is regarded as a testimony of Clement to the journey of the apostle into Spain (*ἐπὶ τὸ τέρμα τῆς δυσῶς ἐλθὼν*) is by no means conclusive, even irrespective of the dubious particle *ἐπὶ*. The Muratori Canon refers indeed to a journey to Spain, but only as an unsupported legend (Rom. xv. 24) on which the book of Acts is silent."

(2.) Some hold it was by James, the son of Zebedee.

(3.) Some say St. Philip.

(4.) Dorotheus of Tyre, and Nicephorus, say it was Simon Zelotes, and that Aristobulus, mentioned in Romans, was a British bishop.

Of these three Stillingfleet says, "The traditions about St. James, Simon Zelotes and Philip preaching the gospel here are all destitute both of evidence and probability."

(5.) According to Simeon Metaphrastes, and the Greek menology, it was St. Peter, but Stillingfleet says this depends only on the authority of Simeon Metaphrastes and other legendary writers, and seems to contradict the authority of scripture, which says that the Gospel of the circumcision was committed to Peter, as that of the uncircumcision to Paul.

(6.) Freculphus says, St. Philip came to the land of the Franks, converted many, and then selecting twelve of his followers placed Joseph of Arimathea at their head and sent them to Britain. Some say this was as early as 51, while others say 63 and 71, but all agree it was in the reign of the British king Arviragus (mentioned by Juvenal, IV. Satire, v. 183), who reigned from A.D. 45 to 73; and in 1409, at the Council of Pisa, the ambassadors of England, on this theory, and as representing the first christianized country, claimed precedence over those of France, Spain and Scotland.

Freculphus was bishop of Lisieux, in Normandy, about A.D. 850, but Bede, the Englishman, who wrote a century before the French author, says nothing about this theory, neither does Nennius, who is said to have been an abbot of Bangor in the seventh century, although by some accounts he lived in 994. (His history ends in 642.) Both of these English writers and also the Anglo Saxon Chronicle (the earliest known copy of which is believed to have been written in 891) give the honor to king Lucius. Mosheim says of the Chronicle of Freculphus that it is "no more than a heavy compilation."

Stillingfleet considers this account a forgery of the monks of Glastonbury, and says "not one of our early writers mentions it."

There would, however, be some evidence in its favor could it be shown that Joseph of Arimethea used the Gallican liturgy, but it is not claimed that Philip and his followers christianized France, nor do we know what liturgy they used.

See note (7.) Welsh historians say the principles of Christianity were introduced from Alexandria by the traders to the Cassiterides, in the middle of the third century, in the reign of Coel, grandfather of Constantine the Great, which Coel was afterwards called Coel Godebrog, *Coel the Believer*.

The Alexandrian Church, however, was founded by St. Mark, and the liturgy was not the same as that of the ancient British Church.

(8.) According to the Welsh Triads, Brân ab Llyr, was the first person who introduced Christianity into Britain. This Brân, son of Lear, was the father of the renowned Caradog ab Brân ab Llyr Llediaeth, or Caractacus, as he was called by the Romans, who was taken prisoner about A.D. 52, and carried captive to Rome. He was accompanied by his father Brân, and when Caradog returned to Britain, his father submitted to become a hostage for him, and remained in Rome seven years, was converted by St. Paul, and on his return home introduced Christianity into Britain, and on that account he stands recorded in the "Genealogies of the Saints," as Brân Fendigaid (*Brân the blessed*). It is also stated that he was accompanied by two holy men, called St. Cyndav and St. Ilid, both of whom are described as "men of Israel;" probably converted Jews.

To this it may be remarked, that Tacitus, who states that Caractacus was accompanied by his wife, daughter and brothers, and that the emperor Claudius pardoned them all, makes no mention of Brân ab Llyr, the reason for which may be that while Caractacus and the other prisoners were brought in triumph to Rome, the father may have followed on after them, voluntarily and without attracting public notice.

How long Caractacus remained in Rome after his pardon is no where stated, but a residence of three years only would make the dates agree, or supposing him to have returned immediately, if

Brân's stay was not *exactly*, but *about* seven years from the time of his son's departure he could have seen St. Paul, who arrived in Rome in the spring of the year 61. We know this date, because Felix was succeeded by Festus, A.D. 60, in the autumn of which year Paul sailed for Rome and passed the winter at Malta.

Brân might have been converted before St. Paul's arrival, for when that apostle wrote to the Romans about A.D. 60, the church was then firmly established there, and that Britons were among the converts is by no means improbable, for Pomponia Græcina, wife of Aulus Plautius, first Roman governor of Britain, was tried for her life on account of her being a Christian, besides which Martial's Claudia (who is *supposed* to be same as the Claudia mentioned by St. Paul, and a daughter of Caradog) was undoubtedly a Briton, and wife of one named Pudens, for in another epigram, Martial says, "Pudens, whom I own my friend, has ta'en the foreign Claudia for his wife."*

* The Romans were becoming well acquainted with the Britons, for not long after the gallant Spaniard Martial praised the blue-eyed British dame, we find a "Saturday Reviewer" of the period absolutely condescending to notice the British lawyers !

Juvenal says, "*Gallia causicidos facunda Britannos*" (*And learned Gaul the British lawyers form.*)

It was probably only to learn the Roman laws that they went to Gaul, for the Britons were then far more civilized than we have any idea of, and the schools of the Druids were so famous that Cæsar tells us the Gauls of the continent sent their children to Britain for religious education.

(9.) And lastly, it is said the Gospel was introduced by king Lleirwg, or Lucius (whom Nennius calls Lever Mawr, the Great Light), about the year 180, and that he sent two of his courtiers, Elvan of Avalon and Medwin of Wells, to Rome, who returned with two missionaries and a letter from Pope Eleutherius. This letter is, however, an addition to the original story, and was never heard of until a thousand years after the death of king Lucius, and is generally allowed to be spurious.

There seems to be a strong probability that this

They had large ships which they sheathed with skins, as we do now with copper, and carried on an export and import trade. Cæsar says they *imported* their brass, and Pliny mentions their *exporting* lead, besides which Britain was a sort of granary to Germany as well as to the Gauls.

As for the latter Pliny tells us they even had horse reaping machines! He says (book xviii. c. 30) "In the broad level fields of the Gauls, enormous machines with teeth set in a row, placed upon two wheels, are driven through the corn, a horse being attached to the machine. The corn thus cut off falls into the furrow or barrow." As the two countries were so intimately connected, the Britons probably had these also. They certainly had war chariots with the axle-trees armed with scythes, and the machinists, who could make the one could also make the other.

Diodorus Siculus, who flourished about 44 B.C., says "The Britons *lead the life of the ancients*, making use of chariots in battle, *such as they say the ancient heroes used in the Trojan war*," and Ammianus Marcellinus (who died A.D. 390), quotes Timagenes, a Greek historian of Alexandria, who flourished B.C. 51, as stating that the Celts had a tradition that they were descendants of the Trojans, which proves that there was some foundation for the so-called fabled descent of the Britons from the Trojans as related by Geoffrey of Monmouth.

Lucius did enter into communication with Rome, but the Church must have been then already established in Britain, and Leland supposes the two messengers, Elvan and Medwin, were two of the old British Christians.

Had the British Church been founded by these two Roman missionaries, they would undoubtedly have introduced the Western or Roman liturgy, which was not that of the British Church, for it is certain that when Augustine (not to be confounded with his great namesake the bishop of Hippo) or Austin landed in Britain (A.D. 597), the British bishops observed the usages and customs of the Gallican Church, and refused submission to Austin and the bishop of Rome, whereupon Austin deprived them of their provinces, and was moreover, it is said, the instigator of the massacre by Edilfrid, king of the Northumbrians, of a great number of British priests of Bangor.

It is impossible, therefore, at this distance of time, to say by whom and when the light of Christianity reached the shores of Britain. Mosheim says of the Apostles—"The stories that are told concerning their arrival and exploits among the Gauls, the English, the Spaniards, the Germans, the Americans, the Chinese, the Indians, and the Russians, are too romantic in their nature, and of too recent a date to be received by an impartial inquirer after the truth. The greatest part of these fables were forged after the time of Charlemagne, when most of the Christian Churches contended

about the antiquity of their origin with as much vehemence as the Arcadians, Egyptians and Greeks disputed formerly about their seniority and precedence."

Hase says—"The manner in which religion was propagated was, commencing generally with the large cities, it was carried forward, not so much by organized missions as by ordinary social intercourse. It had become powerful as a popular element, prevailing most among the lower classes, but by means of slaves and women it had penetrated, as early as near the end of the second century, every order of society."

The first missionaries to Britain appear to have been members of the Gallican Church,* which was founded by St. John, originally at Ephesus, and was extended to Gaul, and Spain, and Britain, and (notwithstanding the assertion of the early writers) the event must have taken place before the time of king Lucius.

* Unless indeed Brân ab Llyr was the founder of the British Church, in which case, as he would have introduced the Roman liturgy of his time, *it might have remained unchanged in Britain, while it was altered in Rome*, by Pope Leo the Great (died A.D. 461), and by Pope Gelasius I. (died A.D. 496), and perhaps even by others before them, and this might be the reason of the difference in the liturgies at the time St. Austin landed in Britain.

There were numerous ancient liturgies, such as that of Jerusalem, ascribed to the apostle St. James ; of Byzantium, assigned to St. Basil ; the Ambrosian, used in Milan. ascribed by some to St. Barnabas, but by others to St. Ambrose ; the Mozarabic of the Spanish Church, and probably many others.

Still, however, we are told that Christianity was first introduced in his reign, and that there were three archbishops' seats appointed, *viz.*, York, London (afterwards removed to Canterbury), and Caerleon (afterwards removed to St. David's). York is the most ancient, being, it is said, so made by king Lucius, about A.D. 180, but the names of only five of the first bishops are given, the third of whom was Eborius, and it is a fact that an Eborius was bishop of York, in 314, and signed the decrees of the Council of Arles. The second after him is called Tadiacus, who fled to Cornwall in the persecutions by the Danes, and the see remained vacant until 622, when the pope made Paulinus archbishop of this see, and Haydn (*Book of Dignities*) commences his list with him.

The first archbishop of London was Thean, in the reign of the same Lucius. It is said he was sent to Britain by pope Eleutherus, and the names of fifteen more are given. Of the earlier ones nothing whatever is known, but the twelfth in order, Restitutus, was really archbishop of London in 314, and as such was present at the Council of Arles. The fourteenth Fastidius was living in 420; the next, Vodimus, was slain by Hengist, and the last archbishop, Theanus, fled to Wales in 553. The above dates are not given by Haydn, who only commences his dates with the bishops Restitutus, A.D. 514, Theonus, A.D. 553, St. Miletus, A.D. 604—and it is evident there is an error here, for the first bishop of 514 appears to be the

same as the archbishop of exactly two centuries previous, and the second bishop is the same as the archbishop who fled to Wales.

We know that a Restitutus was archbishop in 314. He was a married man, of great learning, and was present at the council of Arles, the same year. The fourth after him was Theanus A.D. 553. Here are four archbishops only in the space of two hundred and thirty-nine years, being an average of fifty-nine years each! And so also of the first two bishops; one held office thirty-nine, the other fifty-one years.

It is hard to believe in such a succession of long-lived men, although about this time the Patron Saint of Wales lived, we are told, to the age of one hundred and forty-six years!

With regard to the archbishops of London, Stowe says they "are set down by Jocelyne of Furnes, in his Book of British Bishops, and nowhere else that I can find."

Of the last of the three archepiscopal sees, St. David's, the first archbishop on record is St. David, A.D. 577, after whom without a single date follow a string of twenty-three names, to archbishop Sampson, who went to Brittany, then twenty-two more—bishops—again mere names only, to bishop Bernard in the twelfth century, who submitted to the see of Canterbury. Then from 1147 the surnames and dates also appear, but as a note to bishop Andrew whose surname is unknown, as late as 1484, Haydn says, "The accounts of the early

prelates of this see are very conflicting ; Godwin, Isaacson, Heylyn and Le Neve frequently differing in names and dates."

Bangor is one of the oldest sees. The founder is unknown, but the Church is dedicated to St. Daniel, who was bishop about the year 516 ; and for nearly six centuries there is no certain record of the names of his successors. There is absolutely a gap from 516 to 1107 ! St. Asaph is another ancient see. St. Kentigern was bishop in 583, after him was St. Asaph, but who succeeded the latter is uncertain as there are no authentic records for about five centuries until 1143, when Gilbertus was bishop.

The lists of Irish and Scotch bishops are no better.

Besides this not only were many foreigners consecrated bishops of the Church of England, and the last bishop of Worcester before the martyred Latimer, was John de'Ghinucci, an Italian, but a great number of the English-born prelates were consecrated at Rome, and all in their turn consecrated bishops of the Church of England.

Among the archbishops of Canterbury was Plegmund (A.D. 891), preceptor to King Alfred. He was Primate of all England for twenty-six years. He was consecrated at Rome by Pope Formosus, who was succeeded by Pope Stephen VI., who declared all his predecessors' ordinations to be null and void, and yet Archbishop Plegmund, who was not an archbishop according to Pope Stephen,

ordained priests for the space of a quarter of a century.

Is there a single clergyman in the Church of England, not who can trace his spiritual pedigree to the times of the Apostles, which is an impossibility, but who can even prove that he is not descended from one or more of those ordained by Plegmund ?

Chichley, Archbishop of Canterbury in 1414, and previously bishop of St. David's, was consecrated by Pope Gregory XII., and himself ordained for the space of thirty-five years, and yet Pope Gregory XII. was an anti-pope who was deposed by the Council of Pisa and declared neither to be a pope nor a bishop. What then was the value of Chichley's consecration and of the ordinations conferred by him ?

There are two tests upon which defenders of the dogma of Apostolical succession especially rely ; but it is clear from their own words that the most eminent of the early Fathers did not believe this Ritualistic doctrine.

Ignatius, one of the Apostolic fathers was a disciple of St. John, by whom he was made bishop of Antioch, A.D. 68. He was surnamed Theophorus, because he *carried Christ in his breast*, and not, as it is generally translated, because he was "carried by God," for we have the testimony of Chrysostom that Ignatius never saw the Lord, and could not therefore have been one of those children whom Jesus carried in his arms and blessed.

This blessed disciple of St. John did not place himself on an equality with his master, for he says plainly, "I do not enjoin you as Peter and Paul; they were Apostles, I a condemned man."

Of the fifteen epistles ascribed to St. Ignatius, three only are generally admitted to be genuine: viz., the 8th to Polycarp; 11th to the Ephesians; and the 12th to the Romans, and it is in the epistle to the Romans that the above words occur.

Ignatius is often quoted as saying "Take heed, beloved, to be subject to the bishop, and to the presbyters, and to the deacons," but no scholar will dare deny that there is an extreme uncertainty about his writings, and although some claim seven of the epistles as on the whole genuine, there are others who declare them all to be undoubted forgeries, while still others, among whom is Neander, believe they are filled up with interpolations from various hands and of different dates.

Ignatius (or pseudo-Ignatius) in the epistle to the Magnesians, speaks of "*the bishop presiding in the place of God*, and the presbyters in the place of the council of apostles!"

The author of "Paradise Lost," after exposing the absurdities, corruptions and anachronisms of these epistles, proceeds to say, "These, and other like passages, in abundance through all those short epistles, must either be adulterate, or else Ignatius was not Ignatius, nor a martyr, but most adulterate and corrupt himself. In the midst, therefore, of so many forgeries, where shall we fix to dare say this is Ignatius!"

Chrysostom says, "For great and altogether boundless is the interval between Christ and His disciples. . . . 'As the Father hath sent me so send I you.' Seest thou here also the word hath not the same force? For if we take it as though it had, the Apostles will differ in nothing from Christ."

Gregory the Great, says, "'As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.' That is, as God the Father, sent me God, I, man, also send you men. And again 'so send I you' that is, I love you with that love, when I send you into the midst of the trials of persecution, with which the Father loved me, whom He appointed to come to bear sufferings."

As for the text "Lo, I am with you" Harrison quotes Origen, Cyprian, Athanasius, Hilary, Augustine and many more whose writings state positively that these words were intended for all believers.

St. Augustine says, "For to all those whom Christ saw would become His, He said, 'Lo! I am with you, even to the end of the world.'" Again, "As to the whole Church He promised 'Lo, I am with you, even to the consummation of the world.'" And again he states, "Nor to them (the disciples) only, does what he said 'Lo, I am with you' apply, but even to all Christians that should be after them, and succeed them, even unto the end of the world."

Jerome says, "'Lo, I am with you alway.' He who promised that He would be with His disciples

to the end of the age shows also that they shall always live, and that He will never depart from believers."

Gaudentius, Bishop of Brescia (about A.D. 402), says, "' Even to the end of the world ' said He, ' I am with you.' Not only with the Apostles, but with the disciples, therefore with all believers," and Chrysostom in his Homily on the subject, says that He spoke not to the Apostles only, but ' to believers as to one body.'

And yet the Bishop of Winchester, Dean Hook, and others profess to believe the doctrine of Apostolical succession !

The Bishop of Winchester says, " The bishops of the Church of England *are by unbroken succession* the descendants and representatives of the *original* twelve Apostles"—in which case some of them must be able to trace their pedigree up to Judas Iscariot ! Dean Hook says, " The clergy of the Church of England can trace their connexion with the Apostles *by links—not one of which is wanting*, from the times of St. Paul and St. Peter to our own," and also " There are in existence catalogues of bishops from our time back to the days of Pentecost."

I do not for a moment doubt that the Bishop and the Dean have either seen or truly believe there are such lists, (the fabrication probably of some old monk) for Heraldry and Genealogy was once a favorite study of mine, and I have seen longer pedigrees than a mere eighteen centuries.

In my own library there is a book, printed in 1652, and entitled "The True Pedigree and Lineal Descent of the most ancient and honourable Family of Urquhart." It commences with "Adam. Year of the World I. Before Christ, 3948. Married Eve. He was surnamed the Protoplast; and on his wife Eve begat (2.) Seth, A.M. 130. B.C. 3819. married Shifkah. She was his own coennixed sister, etc. etc." The 13th, Penuel, "was a most intimate friend of Nimrod the mighty hunter, and builder of Babel." The 16th, Esormon, A.M. 1810. B.C. 2139. was Sovereign Prince of Achaia. "He was surnamed *Ourochartos*, that is to say 'fortunate and well-beloved,' after which his posterity even since hath acknowledged him the father of all that carry the name of Urquhart." Another chief (for the compiler professes to give only the names of the chiefs of the clan) Hypsegoras married Arenopas, daughter of Hercules Lybius; another married Termuth "that daughter of Pharaoh Amenophis which found Moses among the bulrushes;" another married "Panthea, daughter of Deucalion and Pyrrha, of whom Ovid maketh mention in the first part of his *Metamorphosis*;" another married Thymelica, daughter of Bacchus; another married Nicolia, "by many supposed to be the Queen of Sheba," and so on, not a date nor an age, nor a marriage omitted down to Sir Thomas Urquhart, of Cromarty the compiler, who was knighted in 1641, by Charles the first, and fought bravely for his king at the battle of Worcester.

Sir Thomas was a man of great learning as his other works show, and he tells us that his pedigree was "derived from authentic records and tradition," and what would the Dean say if this pedigree was pitted against his catalogue of bishops ?

Bingham did not attempt to prove this fable of an unbroken succession. On the contrary, in his "*Origines Ecclesiasticæ*," one of the most celebrated ecclesiastical works in the English language, he says, "An exact and authentic catalogue of these first foundations, would be a very useful and entertaining thing ; but at this distance of time, it is impossible to gratify the world with any such curiosity, whatever pain should be taken about it."

Bishop Hoadley was consecrated Bishop of Bangor in 1715. He was translated to Hereford, thence to Salisbury, and lastly to Winchester, and died in 1761, aged 85, having been for forty-six years a bishop of our Church. He says, "I am fully satisfied that till a consummate stupidity can be happily established and spread over the land, there is nothing that tends so much to destroy all respect to the clergy as the demand of more than can be due to them ; and nothing has so effectually thrown contempt upon a regular succession of the ministry as the calling of no succession regular but what was uninterrupted ; and the making the eternal salvation of Christians to depend upon that uninterrupted succession, of which the most learned men must have the least assurance, and the un-

learned can have no notion but through ignorance and credulity."

We come now to the Rogation Days.

Rogations, from the Latin *rogare*, to beseech, were styled by the Greeks, Litanies (*litaneia*), and were originally as the name implies, the same as they now are in the reformed Church of England, Supplications to God.

About the year 400, however, processions were added to the litanies. These, it is said, originated with the Arians of Constantinople, who, being forced to hold their meetings without the city, went thither singing anthems, and St. Chrysostom, I cannot but say unwisely, to prevent their perverting his people, set up counter processions in which the clergy and people marched through the streets at night singing prayers and hymns and carrying crosses and torches.*

It may be called great presumption in me to stamp as unwise any act of so celebrated a father as the Greek patriarch, so well known by his sobriquet of Golden Mouth, given him for his eloquence, but though a Church-father (*Kerkvader* as we say

* Mosheim says that the public processions and supplications, by which the Pagans endeavored to appease their gods, were adopted into the Christian worship in the fourth century and celebrated with great pomp and magnificence in several places; and Kurtz says that the practise of going in processions commenced at an earlier period than that of Chrysostom, and was first introduced at funerals and marriages.

in Holland), he was only a fallible man, for who besides the God-man was ever perfect? In my pamphlet "The East in Prayer" I gave some of his strange instructions for the bringing up of children, which certainly none will venture to call wise, neither will any of my readers so consider his treatment of himself when he learnt the Bible by heart, for he went to a lonely place and so tortured his body as to bring on a dangerous illness. Three years he remained there, and having neither bench nor bed he rested himself when tired by hanging over a rope suspended from the roof of his cell. Would that these follies were all that could be said of him; but sad to say, his morality was not always what it should have been, for his writings show that he at one time held the belief (now that of the Jesuits) that the end sanctifies the means, for when endeavoring to exonerate himself from having committed an ungenerous act, he says "We may find the use of deceit to be great and needful. . . . It could be shown even yet more fully that it is possible to employ the influence of deceit for good, or rather that in such a case we ought not to call it deceit, but a sort of management worthy of our admiration."

St. Chrysostom knew the Bible by heart, but he certainly must have forgotten one little verse in Revelations (xxi. 8).

Possibly the old Latin proverb "Say nothing evil of the dead" may be quoted against me here; but I wish only to show that good and holy man

as Chrysostom undoubtedly was, he was still but mortal, and *once* at least (for both of the above letters were written at the same period), in a moment of weakness allowed himself to be overcome by the evil one.

Rogations used in processions soon become common, but the Rogation-Days of our Book of Common Prayer, being the three days before Ascension Day, were first instituted in the year 460, by Mamercus, bishop of Vienne (who died in 475), during a time of terror and distress among his people occasioned by the last eruptions of the volcanoes of Auvergne and the incursions of wild beasts which depopulated the city, to avert which evils he appointed these litanical and processional days, together with fasting, and the observance thereof was soon adopted elsewhere. The first mention of it in England is, I believe, in the canons of Cuthbert, Archbishop of Canterbury, A.D. 747, and it was called by the Saxons *gangwuca* and *gangdagas*, ganging or walking weeks and days.

At the Reformation, when all processions were abolished, it was however ordered that the perambulations of parishes in the Rogation week should still be retained and that yearly the curate and principal men should make the round of the parish for the preservation of its rights and liberties, and at their return to church make their common prayers.

It is some comfort to know that there is no office or order of prayer, or even single collect,

appointed for Bishop Mamercus's fast in the Book of Common Prayer.

No one will deny the duty of our rulers to appoint on extraordinary occasions Days of Thanksgiving, nor in times of war, or famine, or pestilence, when the whole nation is mourning and weeping, to set apart a day or days for humiliation and prayer; but why should the Church of England and America in this nineteenth century continue to keep (as they should do if they follow the canon, which however in this case is I think little regarded) the fast appointed by the bishop of a town in Dauphiné, in the fifth century on account of the eruption of a volcano? If it is meet and right, why should we not also keep other and far greater fasts, as for instance that of the mighty King of Assyria whose chief city, although it measured sixty miles in circumference, had not only ceased to figure on the page of history, but its very locality had long been blotted out of the earth, so that within my own recollection skeptics sneered at the Book of Jonah, and considered Nineveh a fabulous city, until in our own day Layard discovered its ruins and proved even the truth of Jonah's measures of the circumference of the city.

This was in the days of Louis Philippe, the Napoleon of Peace, as he was then styled, when, ignoring or forgetting that there were to be wars and rumours of wars, nation against nation and kingdom against kingdom, the general belief was in an approaching millenium of peace and happi-

ness—(as any one who has passed the middle age can remember),—and what have we seen since, and what do we see now? Wars in Hungary, Italy, the Crimea, India, again in Italy, Denmark, Germany, the United States, Brazil and (omitting entirely the half civilized South America, Africa and the like, where they never know peace) greatest of all that of yesterday. Yet the world is hurrying on so fast that in a few months more another, and perhaps greater will probably drive it out of our remembrance.

The London "News of the World" of Feb. 12th says: "We are at peace with the world, but there never was a time when there were greater apprehensions of war."

Dr. Cumming says: "A lull in the storm has often occurred, and will occur again; but there will be no peace till the Prince of Peace returns. The Redeemer gives us the lesson of the day, *Watch ye*, therefore, and *pray always* that ye may be able to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."

But I digress. The King of this great city decreed—"Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything: let them not feed nor drink water; but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hearts."

Why then, I repeat, should we not celebrate the fast of the King of Assyria as well as that of Bishop

Mamercus? Nineveh it may be said is now an uninhabited ruin, and there is therefore no need of praying for that city ; but are not the volcanoes of Auvergne long since extinct and all but forgotten, and is there any more need of still keeping this fast? In the one case we have the words of an inspired prophet that the prayers of the people were heard and granted ; but in the other although we know that the volcanoes, like many other extinct ones, were closed by the will of the Almighty, is there any inspired prophet to prove it was done in answer to the Rogation fast ?

There are also certain Eves, or Vigils, (from the Latin *vigilo*, to watch), or Watchings, to be observed as fasts. These originated, it is believed, with the Primitive Christians, who often assembled secretly, by night, for fear of persecution, and were at last held so late at night and so far abused, that no care could prevent disorders and irregularities, so that they were abolished about the year 420, and turned into evening fasts ; the name however being retained.

With the cessation of persecution however, the necessity for these fasts would seem also to have passed away, and so the Protestant Episcopal Church of America appear to have considered when they wisely revised the Book of Common Prayer in 1789, for they omitted them from the Canons.

They retained, it is true, the collect, epistle and gospel for Easter Eve, but no mention whatever is

made of Eves, or Vigils, in the Table of Fasts, and as I believe the observance of them, if not already dropped, is by no means general in Canada, perhaps the less said of them the better.

Fasting before the Holy Communion is practised by a party in the Church of England, although there is no authority whatever for it in the New Testament, but the contrary; for not only did our Lord administer His Supper after eating, but we have also the words of St. Paul—"For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. *And if any man hunger, let him eat at home.*"

It was still customary in St. Augustine's time to have Agape or Love-feasts in the churches on the Thursday before Easter, followed by the administration of the Lord's Supper, and to some who objected to breaking the fast in the holy week St. Augustine recommended an evening communion, and with regard to taking the sacrament fasting he left it to each one's conscience in the following words "wherefore we compel no one to breakfast before the Lord's Supper, *but neither do we dare to forbid any.*"

A late Theological Dictionary says it has been practised from the time of the Apostles, for which assertion, however, it gives no proof, commencing only with the opinions of St. Chrysostom, (died

A.D. 407) and St. Augustine, (died A.D. 430)—a wide gap between them and the Apostles, besides which as the above extract shows St. Augustine had his doubts—and then quoting no less than seven councils as ordering the Lord's Supper to be taken fasting, *viz.*, the Councils of Carthage, Braga, Mâcon, Auxerre, Toledo, Trullo, and Mayence, (A.D. 1549). But what are these seven, when as early as the time of Cyprian (died A.D. 258) it was customary to hold two councils yearly in each province, and later the Council of Nice decreed that two provincial councils should be held every year, in Lent and in Autumn. Out of these, not hundreds, but thousands, could the Rev. editor only find seven, and not one English Synod among them, and had there even been ten times seven, what right had they to dictate to the whole Church of Christ? We might with equal reason claim that the Synod of Toronto should settle the creed of the whole Church of England.

Moreover the seven councils above named, with perhaps one exception, were all provincial and not general or œcumenical councils or synods,* and have never been recognized by the Church of England, which has only approved of six, all œcumenical, *viz.*, Nice or Nicæa (in Bithynia) A.D. 325; Constantinople, A.D. 381; Ephesus, A.D. 431; Chalcedon, A.D. 451; Constantinople, A.D. 553; Constantinople, A.D. 680.

* Council was the Latin name; the Greeks called them synods.

The one exception is the Trullan Council, (A.D. 691), also called Quinisextine, being intended as a supplement to the Fifth and Sixth General Councils. It derived its other name from having been held in the dome (trullus), of the Palace of Constantinople. This Council which the Rev. editor finds it convenient to quote as an authority, adopted the eighty-five "Apostolical Canons" which Pope Gelasius had pronounced apocryphal, and which are now universally allowed to be forgeries. It also condemned the Roman canon which required married clergymen to separate from their wives, and prohibited the Roman practice of fasting in Lent.

Pope Sergius was so offended that he rejected the council altogether, but one of his successors agreed to accept its decisions with the exception of six canons.

Councils are too often referred to as authorities, and when reading the different histories of them I have sometimes wondered that our Reformers approved even of as many as six. Could they have read St. Gregory Nazianzen's opinion of them?

Of the famous first general council of Nicæa very little is known. According to some authorities it was pure and spotless, but the same can hardly be said of any that followed it.

Gregory says "Councils and congresses are the cause of many evils. . . . I will not sit in one of those councils of geese and cranes. . . . I fly from every meeting of bishops, for I never saw any

good to any, but rather an increase to evils." The canonized Gregory was himself a bishop, patriarch of Constantinople, and a member of the second general council of Constantinople in 381, and he says of it, "All the gluttons, villians and false-swearers of the empire, have been convoked to it. The bishops are low-born and illiterate peasants, blacksmiths, deserters from the army, or reeking from the holds of ships. . . . time-servers and flatterers of the great, long-bearded hypocrites, and pretended devotees, who have neither intellect nor faith."

The third council held at Ephesus, A. D. 431, was not much better than the second. Order was maintained by a guard of soldiers. Another general council called by the emperor Theodosius, was held at Ephesus in 449, at the head of which was Dioscorus, bishop of Alexandria, who was accompanied by a horde of monks, robbers and assassins. This was called by both Latins and Greeks the council of robbers (*latrocinium Ephesinum*). Mosheim says, "The Greeks called this Ephesian council a band or assembly of robbers (*sunōdōn lēstrikēn*), to signify that everything was carried in it by fraud or violence. And many councils, indeed, both in this and the following ages, are equally entitled to the same dishonourable appellation."

This Dioscorus was violent, tyrannical, rapacious and so scandalously immoral, as even to afford themes for the ballad-singers of Alexandria, and

it is said that at this council he struck Flavian, patriarch of Constantinople, in the face, kicked him, and stamped upon him, and it is certain that in consequence of the treatment he received in the council the patriarch died a few days after. Pope Leo the Great vainly implored the emperor to summon a new council to be held in Italy. Theodosius died a few months later, when the pope renewed his request to his successor Marcian, who granted a synod, although he would not consent to its being held in Italy, but summoned the council to meet at Chalcedon (October, 451), and added senators and nobles to it to restrain the tumultuous impulses of the priestly throng. Over five hundred bishops attended. One account says six hundred and thirty. All were from the east with the exception of four legates sent by Pope Leo, and two African bishops, but the real direction was in the hands of the laity, the emperor's commissioners, civil officers of the highest rank, nineteen in number.

This synod, called the fourth general council, condemned and deposed the bishop Dioscorus, and annulled the acts of the Robber Council.

It must not be supposed that the six hundred and thirty bishops above mentioned were bishops of dioceses, like those of later days, for the charges of the early bishops were only parishes. The bishops of the larger cities, however, were naturally more important than those of country congregations.

The distinguished Roman Catholic historian, Du Pin, drew up a catalogue of six hundred and ninety bishoprics in the Northern Africa alone (nearly the same as the present Barbary States), but another account shows there were nine hundred and twenty-six there. Some of whom, Du Pin states, were in villages and military stations, which was also the case elsewhere, for according to Theodoret, Paul, one of the council at Nicœa, was only bishop of a fort (*phrourion*) near the river Euphrates, and according to Sozomen, Eulogius and Barses, monks of Edessa, had each no city, but only a monastery for a diocese.

In the fourth century the councils of Sardica (A.D. 347), and Laodicea (A.D. 367), denounced the custom of ordaining bishops "in villages and small cities, lest the authority of a bishop should be brought into contempt."

Ignatius shows in his epistle to Polycarp, the disciple of St. John, what a Christian bishop of the apostolic age was, for he exhorts Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, to know all his church by name, even the men-servants and maid-servants; to take care of the widows; to take cognizance personally of all marriages; and to suffer nothing to escape his notice. Only a pastor of a parish or *parochial bishop* could do all this!

Sir Harris Nicholas, in his "Chronology of History," enumerates one thousand six hundred and four councils, and gives an alphabetical list, but this is only about one a year, for the whole of Chris-

tendom, from the time of the first Council of Nice, when two were ordered to be held yearly *in each province*, and it is evident therefore that far more in number than those recorded have been entirely lost sight of, and had they all passed into oblivion, the Church could well have borne the loss for it is sad to see the many absurd canons or rules enacted by councils.

In 585, the second council of Mâcon, enacted that if a layman on horseback met a mounted clerk (or man in holy orders) he should uncover his head; *if the clerk was on foot the layman should dismount and salute him*, under pain of being suspended from communion during the bishop's pleasure!

Pretty followers, those lordly priests, of Him who said, "Blessed are the meek." According to them the meekness was for the laity only; and such are the halcyon days, the return of which so many ritualistic priests are praying for.

It was a council that first prohibited all celebration of Marriages in Lent.

Wheatly (On the Book of Common Prayer) says no marriages were allowed in Lent by the primitive churches, and gives as his sole authority the Council of Laodicea; to which I would remark that the primitive church is by some understood to have ended with the death of St. John, the last surviving Apostle, A.D. 100; while others hold that it comprehended the Christian community of the first three centuries. Foxe, in his "Acts and Monuments" includes the ten persecutions, and makes

the period end A.D. 314. The council Wheatly refers to was held in 361, or according to some as late as 372. Therefore there is no proof that it was the custom of the primitive church, as he says, for the council referred to was held two and a half centuries after the time of the Apostles, and half a century later than the latest date given to the primitive church.

Secondly, this council, the first which forbade marrying in Lent, was a semi-Arian council, as well as a provincial synod, and was not of course recognized by our Reformers, and Wheatly, although he gives as his opinion that marriages should be prohibited during the more solemn seasons, declares "there is no canon nor custom of this realm, that prohibits marriages to be solemnized at any time."

A few unimportant councils confirmed the Laodicean canons, adding other sacred seasons when marriages were forbidden, and as step leads to step, the church, according to Prof. Kurtz, of Dorpat, "attached special merit to complete abstinence from conjugal intercourse," and finally before the end of the ninth century, "entirely prohibited it during the three seasons of Quadragesima,* on feast-days, and on the stationary days,"† thus of

* They then observed the Easter Quadragesima, another after Pentecost, and a third before Christmas.

† From a very early period Wednesdays and Fridays, in remembrance of the sufferings of our Lord, were observed in public worship as days of vigil, (*dies stationum*, i. e., days of keeping watch or guard), in accordance, as Kurtz states, with the idea of a militia Christiana.

course greatly increasing her power in the confessional, as well as in the granting of dispensations and absolutions.

The Greek Church is the religion of Russia, and the Russians in their ignorance have a proverb, "Heaven can only be reduced by famine," and they have therefore four great fasts. Before Easter, seven weeks of abstinence are enjoined; the same from the first week after Pentecost; before the Assumption fourteen days, and before Christmas forty days.

During these periods say Rabbe and Duncan, in their History of Russia, "not only is animal food strictly prohibited, but also sexual intercourse."

Lacroix, a French writer, says that they then eat coarse bread, garlic, roots and mushrooms. The oil from hemp seed or fish takes the place of butter, and besides is generally rancid and nauseous, and one can imagine how the breath of these true believers must smell after such a repast. The less robust are taken sick, but they do not the less continue to fast. You see some of these unfortunate beings, exhausted and dying, refuse to take any milk, push away broth with horror, even when it has been ordered by a physician, and hold strictly to a vegetable diet, which makes them grow thin, and sometimes kills them. It is thus they are to gain Paradise.

The German traveller "Kohl," says, however, "It is asserted that the Russian drinks as much

brandy during the fast as at other times, though he does not call it so, but designates it by all sorts of circumlocutory expressions."

As to the rich, Lacroix says "*they buy the right* of living during the fasts the same as they do the rest of the year. When they are obliged to conform to the rules of the Church, they fast by eating the most delicate fish, vegetables raised in hot houses, and nourishing fruits ripened by the heat of stoves."

This is the Greek Church which some desire to see united to the Protestant Episcopal Churches of England and America, and it is, it must be allowed, a very comfortable belief for those who have long purses and easy consciences.

Fasting has always been an important weapon in the Church of Rome, principally perhaps because dispensations to eat meat can only be granted by the church, and being generally, if not always sold, (except in case of sickness or to the poor,) much money is thereby diverted into the church's coffers.

It is a subject to which unfortunately our martyred reformers did not pay sufficient attention, for the fasts of our church were inherited not from the Church of Christ, but from the Church of Rome.

The custom in some churches of turning to the east in prayer is another matter they appear to have overlooked, perhaps because there was no written authority or canons referring thereto to be revoked.

The personal tastes and predilections of the last Tudor Queen were not without their influence on

subsequent changes, and under Queen Elizabeth, the Romish Saints' Days which had been omitted in both books of Edward VI. were restored to the Prayer Book. This was done both for the remembering the days of the patron saints of the kingdoms and of the different guilds of trades, and also because it was customary to date terms in courts of law, and holding of public markets and fairs from Saints' days instead of days of the month. It is a curious fact that this was carried by a casting vote. When the question of Saints' days in the calendar was considered by the convocation, it was sharply and fully debated; fifty-nine members voted for Saints' days, fifty-eight for omitting them.

Look at the absurd fable of St. Agnes (Jan. 21), and her lamb; St. Benedict (March 21), whose trial was greater than that of Shadrach, Meshech and Abednego; the Invention of the Cross (May 3); St. Dunstan (May 19), and his taking a she-devil by the nose with a pair of red hot tongs; St. Alban, (June 17) after whom it is the fashion to name so many churches—*if there ever was such a person*—for I believe we have only monkish authority both for his having existed and for the many miracles, he is said to have performed.

This so-called St. Alban is said to have suffered martyrdom about A.D. 305, but there are great chronological as well as other difficulties in the story. The first mention we have of him is in Gildas, called the Father of British History, whose works were looked upon with suspicion even in

Archbishop Ussher's time, but he was supposed to have lived and to have written what remains under his name during some part of the fifth or sixth century, until in 1839 when Mr. Thomas Wright, F.S.A., the well-known antiquarian, in a paper read before the Royal Society of Literature, showed clearly that in all probability such a person as Gildas *never existed*, and that *his history was a forgery*.*

Ussher thought there were two of the name, but Ritson says "There were no less than five Gildases made out of one, each of whom is the author of books that never existed," and Sharon Turner says "As far as Gildas can be supported and made intelligible by others, he is an acceptable companion. But he contains so much ignorant and exaggerated narration, and uses so many rhetorical generalities, that he cannot be trusted alone."

* It must be a forgery of early date as he is quoted by the Venerable Bede, but Sharon Turner says "The errors of Gildas are not to be charged upon Bede; he has only adopted them because he had no other Latin document to use. The Roman account of British transactions ceased, when the Imperial troops finally quitted England. Native literature only could supply materials afterwards for future history; but the Saxons of Bede's age did not understand the British tongue. Hence Bede had no authority but Gildas for this part of his history."

Another old work "Ingulph's Chronicle," has also been found to be a monkish forgery. This "Ingulph" terminates in 1091, and is continued by another hand to 1486. It was first printed in London in 1596, but in the *Archæological Journal* of 1862, it was *proved* to be an undoubted fiction of the 14th or 15th centuries, to all appearance by the monks of Croyland, to patch up a defective title.

This so-called St. Gildas tells us that like as the Israelites trod dry-foot across the Jordan, so St. Alban opened a path across the noble river Thames, whose waters stood abrupt like precipices on either side.

Bede, who died A.D. 735, and here quotes the priest Fortunatus, in his Praise of Virgins, repeats this story and adds another, that St. Alban ascended a hill with his persecutors, and when on the top of the hill he prayed that God would give him water, and immediately a living stream broke out before his feet.

Matthew of Westminster, a Benedictine monk who flourished in the fourteenth century, not only repeats these two miracles, but also among sundry others tells us that when St. Alban was for six months and more in prison, no dew or rain moistened the earth, but every day the whole country was burnt up under a most scorching sun. No fields, no trees produced any crops.

As it may be adduced in favor of this so-called saint that a town was named after him, perhaps I ought to state that he is said to have suffered at Verulam, in Hertfordshire, where a council was held more than a century after, in 429, and St. Germaine, Bishop of Auxerre, in France, caused his tomb to be opened and deposited in it some reliques of saints. Verulam was afterwards ruined by the Saxons, and in 791, nearly five hundred years after the date of St. Alban's death, Offa, King of Mercia, founded there a monastery in his

honour, and the town which gradually arose around the monastery took the same name.

It is said an angel appeared to King Offa and admonished him to raise out of the earth the body of the protomartyr, the memory of whom even had been lost for centuries, but the King assembling his clergy and people at Verulam they commenced the search for his body with prayer, fasting and alms; when a ray of fire was seen to stand over the place of burial, like the star that conducted the magi from Bethlehem, and the body was found excellently preserved by the relics placed there by Germanus more than three centuries before!*

And this is a saint of our calendar to whose honour churches are still built!

Another legend is that when the saint was beheaded, as the fatal blow was struck, the eyes of the executioner dropped out of the sockets and fell to the ground with the head of the martyr! Well may Canon Trevor say "Miracles were asserted in

* Is it not strange that the body of such a saint, the great protomartyr as he was styled, should have required the relics of other saints to keep it in good condition? I suppose it would be highly improper to suggest that the well preserved body might have been *planted* the night previous to its discovery by King Offa, guided by the monks! Such pious frauds were common even as early as the fourth century. Mosheim says, "tombs were falsely given out for the sepulchres of saints and confessors; the list of the saints was augmented with fictitious names, and even robbers were converted into martyrs. Some buried the bones of dead men in certain retired places, and then affirmed that they were divinely admonished by a dream, that the body of some friend of God lay there."

greater abundance than those of Christ and the apostles, but their object was almost invariably to verify a relic, and increase the profit of those who exhibited it. The saints were multiplied in proportion to the demand; but as the privilege was precious, the manufacture, once free to bishops and councils, was reserved to the Pope. John XV. was the first to exercise the right of his sole prerogative in the canonization of the Bishop Udalric, A.D. 993."

So that all that was requisite when the French bishop opened the tomb in 429 (if such event ever occurred?) was for him simply to name and declare holy the bones that were exhumed, and so also in 791, when the tomb was again said to be found, all that was necessary was that a bishop, (even were he a boy bishop like him of Rheims) should say "I declare these to be the bones of the holy A. B. C. or D.," and it became at once a matter of faith, and heresy to disbelieve it.

Chauncey, in his History of Hertfordshire (London, 1770), after relating some of these legends, adds "But others hold that Matthew Paris, and the other monks of St. Albans, invented these fabulous stories to blind the world, and induce the people of future ages to believe the innocency of this wicked king, because he was their founder, and by such artifices they were wont to increase their benefactions and the revenue of their church."

Offa had been guilty of the treacherous murder of Albert, king of the East Angles, and it was by

way of penance that he built the monastery of St. Albans.

Many of these tales are disgusting, and when I turn to the 16th December, and read, "O Sapientia," I feel as if it ought rather to be O Folly! Let me say, however, that Sapientia is not a saint as no doubt many consider it, for where are Protestants to look for a key to the Calendar, except in a Romish hagiology which they are hardly likely to possess, but it is the commencement of a Latin Anthem which was anciently sung on that day, and which is to be found in the later editions of a selection sometimes styled Hymns Pöpish and Protestant.*

The American Church left all these foolish Romish saints' days out of their Calendar.

One more digression, and I have nearly done.

Decking the Churches with evergreens at Christmas is in my opinion a custom of doubtful necessity.

Now that its origin is forgotten it may be a harmless expression of joy and "peace among men of good pleasure,"† but as it is undoubtedly a custom

* If the early editions deserved this appellation much more so do the later. The compilers commenced with such hymns as No. 39, of which it has been said that the third verse (Those dear tokens of His Passion) should never be in a modern Church Hymn Book, and allowing a few years for the public to become accustomed to them, have now added a Hymn to the Virgin (Shall we not love thee, mother dear?)!

What will be the next step?

† Dean Alford's revised version.

which the Christians adopted from their pagan ancestors is not the breach better than the observance?

In a late number of the *London Illustrated News* it was stated that for the Christmas of 1869, Trinity Church, New York, expended about eight hundred dollars for the evergreen for its half-dozen churches and chapels. St. George's expends four hundred dollars. St. Thomas' Church expends nearly five hundred dollars, "and would probably have the most gorgeous display." It has come to such a pass that our Churches are likened to theatres. "Most gorgeous display"—a Christmas pantomime would be described in similar language.

Is not this moreover a misappropriation of sacred funds to expend such sums for decorations which in a few days only will be swept away as worthless? After liberally providing for its Ministry and for the necessary expenses of the Church, should not any overplus be devoted to the poor?

For those who like the authority of Councils, I regret having so few to bring forward, but Prynne in his *Histrio-Mastix*, quotes "the councils" as forbidding the early Christians "to decke up their houses with lawrell, yvie, and greene boughes (as we use to doe in the Christmas season)." The second council of Braga, in Portugal, A.D. 572, forbade the custom because savoring too much of paganism, but still only prohibited its being done at the same time with the Pagans. The council of Auxerre, in France, A.D. 614, also condemned the practise for the same reasons.

Polydore Vergil (Langley's translation), says "Trimming of the temples with hangynges, floures, boughes, and garlondes, was taken of the heathen people, whiche decked their idols and houses with suche array."

Sir Isaac Newton, in his observations upon Daniel and the Apocalypse (Gent. Mag. for 1733), observes, that "the Heathens were delighted with the festivals of their gods, and unwilling to part with those ceremonies ; therefore Gregory, Bishop of Neo-Cæsarea, in Pontus, (flourished A.D. 264), to facilitate their conversion, instituted annual festivals to the saints and martyrs : hence the keeping of Christmas with ivy, feasting, plays and sports, came in the room of the Bacchanalia and Saturnalia ; the celebrating of May-day with flowers, in the room of the Floralia."

The English custom of evergreen decking was however probably derived from the Celts, for the Druids on their New Year's day marched with great solemnity to gather the mistletoe and performed no ceremonies without the leaves of the oak, and Stukely mentions the introduction of mistletoe into York Cathedral on Christmas Eve as a remain of Druidism.

In Brande's Antiquities we are told that "Where Druidism prevailed, the houses were decked with evergreens in December, that the sylvan spirits might repair to them and remained unrippd with frost and cold winds, until a milder season had renewed the foliage of their darling abodes."

And lastly—to return again to my theme—"all the Fridays in the year except Christmas;"—and there are many Churchmen who religiously eat fish accordingly.

When this custom of eating "*turbot à la crème au gratin*," and the like, and calling it fasting, was introduced into the Church of Rome, it is impossible to say, but it was not long after the era of the primitive church for the church historian Socrates, called the Scholastic, who was born about A.D. 380, and was living as late as A.D. 439, when describing the difference of rites and ceremonies in divers churches, says, "For some abstain from all living creatures; others, of all living creatures only eat fish; some eat fowls together with fish, because, according to Moses, they say, they come of water. Others abstain from seeds (or berries) and eggs; others eat dry bread only, and some not so much as that. There are some that fast till the ninth hour (3 P.M.) and then eat any kind of meat. Other nations observe other customs in their fasts, and that for various reasons. *And since no one can show us any written rule about this, it is plain, the apostles left this matter free to every one's liberty and choice, that no one should do a good thing out of necessity or fear.*"

Dean Hook truly remarks "the change of diet from flesh to fish, is but a mock fast," but, as the above extract from Socrates shows, is in error

when he adds, "and an innovation utterly unknown to the ancients."*

One of the name of Hermas was saluted by St. Paul (Romans xvi. 14), but it is uncertain whether he was the author of the book bearing his name although it is undoubtedly a very ancient work, and both Origen and Eusebius believed it was composed by him. Such also is the opinion of Archbishop Wake, who translated his works. By others it is attributed to Hermas, brother of Pope Pius I., bishop of Rome (about A.D. 150.)

Canon Robertson considers it may belong to the interval between the first and second Hermas; the earlier half of the second century.

Herma's says, "The true fast is this; do nothing wickedly in thy life, but serve God with a pure mind, and keep His Commandments, and walk according to His precepts, nor suffer any wicked desire to enter into thy mind. But trust in the Lord, that if thou dost these things and fearest Him, and abstainest from every evil work, thou shalt live unto God. If thou shall do this, thou shalt perfect a great fast, and an acceptable one unto the Lord." And further he adds "Thus, therefore, shall thou keep it. First of all, take heed to thyself, and keep thyself from every wicked act, and from every filthy word, and from every hurtful desire; and purify thy mind from

* Church Dictionary. Ninth edition. London, 1864. It is possible this may be corrected in later editions, but I am trusting to my own small library.

all the vanity of this present world. If thou shalt observe these things, this fast shall be right. Thus, therefore, do. Having performed what is before written, that day on which thou fastest thou shalt taste nothing at all but bread and water; and computing the quantity of food which thou art wont to eat upon other days, thou shalt lay aside the expense which thou shouldst have made that day, and give it unto the widow, the fatherless, and the poor. And thus thou shalt perfect the humiliation of thy soul, that he who receives of it may satisfy his soul, and his prayer come up to the Lord God for thee."

St. Augustine, the greatest and most influential among the Fathers, says "Fasting without almsgiving, is a lamp without oil."

St. Chrysostom appears to have been the last of the Church-Fathers, who understood what true fasting was. In one of his Lenten homilies* he says "*The true fast is abstinence from vices.* For abstinence from meat was appointed upon this occasion, that we should curb the tone of our flesh, and make the horse obedient to his rider. He that fasts, ought above all things to bridle his anger, and learn meekness and clemency, to have a contrite heart, to banish the thoughts of all inordinate desires, to set the watchful eye of God before his

* The Lenten fast of a tithe of the year, or thirty-six days, as established by Pope Telesphorus, was then become general both in the east and west.

eyes, and his uncorrupted judgment ; to set himself above riches, and exercise great liberality in giving of alms, and to expel every evil thought against his neighbour out of his soul. This is the true fast. Therefore let this be our care, and let us not imagine as many do, that we have fasted rightly, when we have abstained from eating until evening. This is not the thing required of us, but that together with our abstinence from meat, we should abstain from those things that hurt the soul, and diligently exercise ourselves in things of a spiritual nature."

In another Homily he says "Let no one place his confidence in fasting only, if he continue in his sins without reforming. For it may be, one that fasts not at all, may obtain pardon, if he has the excuse of bodily infirmity. But he that does not correct his sins can have no excuse. Thou hast not fasted by reason of the weakness of thy body ; but why art thou not reconciled to thy enemies ? Canst thou pretend bodily infirmity here ? If thou retainest hatred and envy, what apology canst thou make ? In such crimes as these thou canst not fly to the refuge of bodily weakness." Again he says "If thou canst not pass all the day fasting, by reason of bodily weakness, no wise man can condemn thee for this. For we have a kind and merciful Lord, who requires nothing of us above our strength. He neither requires abstinence from meat, nor fasting simply of us, nor that for this end we should continue without eating only ; but that

withdrawing ourselves from worldly affairs, we should pass all our leisure time in spiritual things. *For if we would order our lives soberly, and lay out our spare hours upon spiritual things, and eat only so much as we had need of, and nature required, and spend our whole lives in good works, we should not need the help of fasting.* But because human nature is negligent, and gives itself rather ease and pleasure, therefore our kind Lord, as a compassionate Father, hath found out this medicine of fasting for us, that we should abridge ourselves in our pleasures, and transfer our care of secular things to works of a spiritual nature. If therefore there be any here present who are hindered by bodily infirmity, and cannot continue all day fasting, I exhort them to have regard to the weakness of their bodies, and not upon that account deprive themselves of spiritual instruction, but for that very reason to pay more diligent attendance on it, *for there are many ways besides abstinence from meat, which will open to us the door of confidence towards God.* He therefore that eats, and cannot fast, let him give the more plentiful alms, let him be more fervent in his prayers, let him show the greater alacrity and readiness in hearing the divine oracles. For the weakness of the body is no impediment in such offices as these. Let him be reconciled to his enemies, and forget injuries, and cast all his thoughts of revenge out of his mind. *He that does these things, will show forth the true fasting, which the Lord chiefly requires."*

Again, in another homily, he says "Christ did not say to his disciples, I have fasted, although He might have spoken of those forty days; but 'Learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart:' and when he sent them to preach the gospel, He did not tell them they should fast, but eat such things as are set before them. . . . This I speak not, to depreciate fasting, God forbid, but to give it extraordinary commendations. Only I am sorry ye should think this, which is in the lowest rank of virtues, sufficient to salvation, while other things of greater value, charity, humility, mercy, are wholly neglected."

St. John with the Golden mouth, was worthy of the name, but he spoke unadvisedly in saying that "our Lord had found out this medicine of fasting," as in fact he seems to allow in the following Homily, for it is certain that neither our Lord nor His Apostles enacted any law about fasting.

Our Lord's only directions, as recorded by St. Matthew, are "When ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance, for they disfigure their faces that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly," but these words were *to the Jews** who were com-

* *Ante* page 14.

manded to fast by the Law, and the authorized version, according to Tischendorf and Alford, agrees here with all the oldest manuscripts, with the unimportant omission only in the two oldest codices of the word "openly."

In coming to an end let me remark that when I requested permission of the English author to reprint his tract (which was most kindly granted) I only purposed adding a few supplementary pages, but have been gradually led on to say far more than I intended. My endeavor has been to give extracts from the Church-Fathers or historical facts only, in as few words as possible, and without obtruding my own ideas more than absolutely necessary, leaving it for my readers to form their own opinions. As a layman I write principally to the laity, and conclude in the words of St. Paul, "I speak as unto wise men ; judge ye what I say."

